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## Romania

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### **New Romanian Government introduces new Ministers**

**Report Categories:**

Agricultural Situation

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**Report Highlights:**

On April 22, the Romanian Parliament passed a no-confidence vote which led the standing government to dissolve. In early May a coalition government represented by three political parties, Social-Democrat party (PSD), National Liberal Party (PNL) and Conservative Party (PC), united under a Social-Liberal Alliance (USL), came into power. Introduction of new Ministers for Agriculture and Environment follow.

**Ministry of Agriculture:** In February 2012 Stelian Fuia, President of Committee on Agriculture in Chamber of Deputies, was appointed Minister of Agriculture. His term lasted only 10 weeks, through the end of April, when a vote of no-confidence led the standing government to dissolve.

On May 7, 2012, **Daniel Constantin** was appointed as the new Agricultural Minister. Since 2010 he served as president of the Conservative Party (PC). Born in 1978, Mr. Constantin graduated in 2002 from the Animal Husbandry Faculty, and two years later he earned a Masters Degree in Management of Quality and Innovation from the University of Agricultural Science and Veterinary Medicine in Bucharest. In 2003 Mr. Constantin joined the team of the Secretary of State for European Integration in the Ministry of Agriculture as coordinator of activities of the body of European Counselors. Between 2006 and 2009, Mr. Constantin managed the activity of a company specialized on EU funds accession. For several months in 2009 he served as the General Director of the Agency for Payments and Intervention in Agriculture.

Minister Constantin listed several main areas to be addressed during his term in office, such as land consolidation, establishment of a functioning irrigation system, and organic production. Under his direction, Romania is expected to become more active in the CAP 2014-2020 debate. In addition, the Minister is expected to propose a reduced VAT rate (currently at 24 percent) for staple food in 2013. This drop in VAT level is envisaged to be in place before the end of 2012 for the milling industry, where such a measure would serve as a positive tool for addressing the significant fiscal evasion occurring in this sector.

Agricultural producers have expressed hope that the Ministry of Agriculture, under new leadership, would make progress: with establishing a functioning national irrigation system, with increasing national payments to the crop and livestock sectors, with accessing biotech soybeans for cultivation, and with reducing fiscal evasion by entities in the sector. The Agriculture Minister's previous experience with EU funds administration is viewed as an advantage for Romania in gathering additional benefits under the next CAP 2014-2020.

**Ministry of Environment:** Although Attila Korodi had only just been appointed Minister of Environment in early April 2012, the no confidence vote led to a political change in the standing government. Along with Minister Constantin, **Mrs. Rovana Plumb** entered the new Romanian government as the Minister of Environment. Mrs. Plumb served as a member of a previous Romanian Government, as Secretary of State for the National Authority for Consumers' Protection (2001-2004), and as a member of the European Parliament since 2007.

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